

# CONTACT

Official Publication of the National Association of Free Will Baptists

February 2001



**The Mud Lily  
Special Events Ideas  
No Reason Not to Die  
Censorship and You  
Disease Plays No Favorites**



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*Editor-in-chief:* Dr. Melvin Worthington

*Editor:* Jack Williams

*Editorial Assistant:* Marilyn Pritchard

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# THE SECRETARY SPEAKS



Melvin Worthington

## Obeying the Oughts

**T**he vocabulary of Christians is often void of such terms as duty, obligation, commitment, sacrifice, obedience, discipline and obligation. While these words may not make one comfortable, they are biblical words that express profound theological concepts. The way words are used change over time, but the concepts embedded in biblical terms do not change.

During a conference on preaching, the speaker stated that we should never say that someone "ought" to do something. He suggested that we be positive in our presentation. While this sounds good, it is certainly not totally biblical.

The word *ought* is used frequently in the Bible. The meaning includes the idea that something is binding or necessary, that we owe something and that we have an obligation.

### *The ought regarding our wealth*

Christians have an obligation to use their wealth for the glory of God. While Jesus rebuked the slothful servant in Matthew 25:27, He commends tithing in Matthew 23:23.

Christians owe the tithe to God and have an obligation to give an offering. One's attitude toward wealth often reflects his spiritual condition. A tangible way to measure spiritual growth is to examine the way one handles his wealth.

### *The ought regarding our worship*

We are told to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and in spirit and truth. Paul addresses this in I Timothy 3:15. Worship is not an option; it is an obligation. The woman at the well had a life-changing conversation

with Jesus about worship in John 4.

### *The ought regarding our words*

Paul hammers this truth, "That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak . . . Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man," (Col. 4:4, 6).

We must carefully guard our tongue. We have a sacred obligation to speak words that edify and encourage others. Paul declares, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers," (Eph. 4:29).

### *The ought regarding our walk*

Paul reminds Christians at Thessalonica of the importance of their walk, "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more," (I Thess. 4:1).

John declared, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked," (I John 2:6). Christians have an obligation to walk worthy of their vocation, walk in love and walk circumspectly.

### *The ought regarding our work*

Jesus addresses this issue in John 13 when He washed the disciples' feet. He gave the disciples an example to follow. They were called to serve, to do the Lord's work and so are we.

Jesus reminded them, ". . . Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you," (John 13:12-15).

### *The ought regarding the weak*

Christians have an obligation toward those who are weak. Paul says, "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive," (Acts 20:35).

He further declares, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves," (Rom. 15:1).

### *The ought regarding the Word*

The writer of Hebrews asserts, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip," (Heb. 2:1).

Observing these oughts will bring balance and direction to our lives. So the next time you read the Bible and come to an *ought*, ask yourself if you are obeying this ought. If you're not, ask the Lord to help you begin obeying it. ■

### *The Secretary's Schedule*

February 2001

4-7 Michigan Ministers Retreat

16-17 CMP Board Meeting

22-24 California Men's Retreat





**The hand of God touched  
a man on a muddy dike  
in Vietnam**

## **The Mud Lily**

**By Ron Scott**

**A**mid the stench and mire of leech-infested delta swamps in Vietnam, there is a place where God allows a large white flower to bloom. It rests on a slender stem just a breath above the muck and filth beneath it. It was there, perhaps to whisper to me as I passed, that even from that war-cursed land, filled with death and decay, God could bring forth good.

### **Months Earlier**

January 1969: We hurried quietly through the frigid pre-dawn air of Tacoma, Washington, to board a large plane that would take us to a foreign land. Just kids, 18 or 19 years old, shivering more from fear than from the blowing snow and the frozen turf cracking beneath our boots, we shuffled in silence to take our places. Most would never see home again.

I moved to my assigned row, seated myself next to a window in the tail section, stared into the blackness and listened to the hum of the engine taking me far away from my West Virginia home. I was 22 years old when the wheels of that big bird left the ground, I almost lost it but somehow held back the tears.

Just six short months earlier I had been singing, *Just A Little Talk With Jesus*, as I sat beside Papa in the back row of the choir at McCorkle Free Will Baptist Church, a few miles outside Charleston. I was teaching my Junior Sunday School class and listening to the fiery preaching of my pastor, Reverend Woodrow Lawson.



It had been only three years to the day since I had knelt at the old mourner's bench on a cold January night and God had saved my soul.

Thoughts of home crowded my thinking. I longed for Delilah, my wonderful and beautiful wife of two years, who, in just a few short weeks, would be having our first child, Deah. I had been drafted into the United States Army, taken from all that I held dear, and yet I was not alone, for God was closer than the seat belt that held me in place. I considered it not so much the hum of the engine that bore me away but the hands of the Eternal.

### Search and Destroy

From the freezing cold of the Northwest to the sweltering heat of the far East, we flew into Cam Ranh Bay where I would eventually be assigned to the First Infantry Division, second battalion and eighteenth division of Charlie Company. The Big Red One. Our main objective—conduct search and destroy missions in South Vietnam.

It did not take long to realize that my world had changed dramatically from copperheads of West Virginia hills to bamboo vipers, brown scorpions, anopheles mosquitoes and leech-infested delta of Southeast Asia.

By Chinook helicopters the U.S. Army introduced me to Fort Seminole, a night defensive position in the southern jungle of Vietnam. From there, at first, we flew out for short trips to engage the enemy, not needing the quart or so of water we took from the NDP, but soon we were getting our water from tributaries of the Saigon River and restocking our C rations as we scrambled onto Huey helicopters going from one hot spot to another.

The battles became more intense, sometimes lasting for days as we laid siege to villages, dug in deep and set out claymore mines in the night. Then waiting in the darkness.

Charlie Company was an exceptional unit. All of us wanted to live through every engagement with the enemy. We dreamed of the day we would return to Long Binh where we would get on board that Freedom Bird which would take us back to our Western world, back to my Appalachian Mountain home. I dreamed of that place where the arms of a godly wife

waited in prayer for my return and 10-month-old fingers would cling to my neck as tiny lips gave me soft kisses.

### Kansas Blood

At that point, however, the only thing that gripped my neck then was the heavy bandolier of forty-millimeter grenades that fit into the M-79 hanging from my side. It was August 17, 1969. I was deep in the column that hacked its way through dense jungle, thinking about the two days we had relaxed on stand-down in Saigon.

I had spent those days with my great friend, Terry Barr, a father of two, from Kansas. We shared stories of home, of the ones who loved us. We laughed, sighed, talked and even sang together.

I told him about Jesus and read to him verses from the New Testament which I kept in the webbing of my helmet. Barr was a big man with a gentle quietness about him that I loved. Then came the explosion, shaking the ground we walked on. Screams filled the air. The column of men fell as one

point element with him that very day, and also to carry the same radio that I began taking from his bleeding back. I laid it aside in the Vietnamese soil . . . now stained crimson with his blood.

I scooped him up into my arms and carried him to the helicopter waiting impatiently to get away from the fire zone.

I could feel hot blood running down my elbow, mixing with sweat that poured from my body and with tears streaming down my face, soaking my lower left side. Others gathered around me and together we lifted my friend into the arms of a man waiting in the medavac helicopter hovering overhead.

I looked up to him and I noticed the red cross on his helmet. Oh, that only I could have been lifting Barr into the arms of the Eternal Savior who also bore a cross . . . on His back!

### Valley of the Shadow

In the succeeding days the battles intensified. Walking through fields of the fallen seemed to be the order of



Ron Scott (L) with his friend Terry Barr (C) who was killed three days later.

man to the ground. But there was only one man dead—Terry Barr.

I was called to the front to recon by fire using the Thumper that I carried that day.

I had been scheduled to walk in the

the day. And night brought no respite: Footsteps, screams in the blackness, hushed whispers of mercy from comrade to wounded friend, and footsteps . . . going somewhere.

Sobs of pain and fear were not al-



lowed, for the darkened silence would carry even the slightest muffled whine into the ever-listening ears of the enemy. Often I clasped a buddy's mouth to protect him from his own groans. These were the orchestrations of war. The dirge of darkness and death.

Caked with mud and blood, my silent tears were cupped by the hand of my God. I stared past the darkness into the distant lights of His night and fought off the temptation to ask, *Why?* into the very face of God.

Instead, peace covered me like a blanket as I whispered the words of the Psalm on which I had grown to fully trust. Sometimes I spoke it softly to myself and sometimes loudly so others could hear . . . "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou are with me. Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

It was then that I could feel, as it were, the hand of God come down and cover me while the storm of war raged about. So near to me was His presence that I felt if I were to raise up quickly in the darkness I would brush His robe.

The hurt in my heart for wanting home was overridden by the desperate need to stay alive long enough to strike one more day from the calendar and to dream of the Freedom Bird that would one day take me to those I loved.

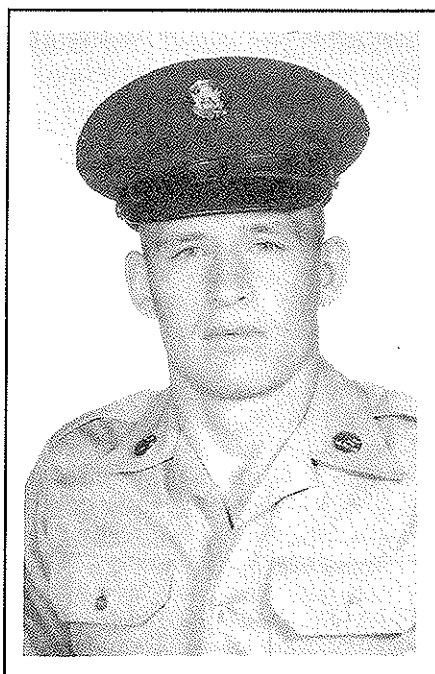
I came to understand that the safest place in all the world is not necessarily around those you love in a familiar setting or the safety of your favorite chair—but in the presence of God.

### Called from the Mud

It was the worst of times, but it was the best of times, for I learned to lay my life into the hands of God and fear nothing and, for a season, I had eaten from the table prepared by God in the presence of my enemies.

Many thoughts filled my mind as I watched and listened in complete darkness of night. It was two or three in the morning when I finished guard duty that night in early September and gently shook the man next to me, for it was his turn to watch.

Now the night was calm, no shots



Ron Scott—U.S. Army

or shouts could be heard and there was no fear. I lay back on that muddy dike and looked up into the star-filled sky. I closed my eyes and thanked my Lord for the peace I felt. Though exhausted and worn I did not fall asleep. Instead, I heard a call. A sweet voice spoke to me and put into words what I had been feeling for days: *I want you to preach the gospel!*

How do you say no to your closest Friend, your Protector and Savior? I spent the next hour giving God all the reasons why He should call another, but I ended my talk with Him that night by saying; "Lord, if you want me to, I will preach Your Word."

### The First Sermon

I left the field of battle one year to the day from the time I had arrived and oh, how that Freedom Bird did soar. I returned home without a scratch to the embrace of my wife and family, and Deah's 11-month-old fingers hugging my neck and twisting my ears.

Six months later we said goodbye to the United States Army from Fort Hood, Texas. It was 9:00 p.m., Friday, August 21, 1970, when we left Killeen, Texas. We drove all night and stopped over at my grandmother's home in Salem, Arkansas.

That evening, late, the phone rang. It was the pastor of Grandma's

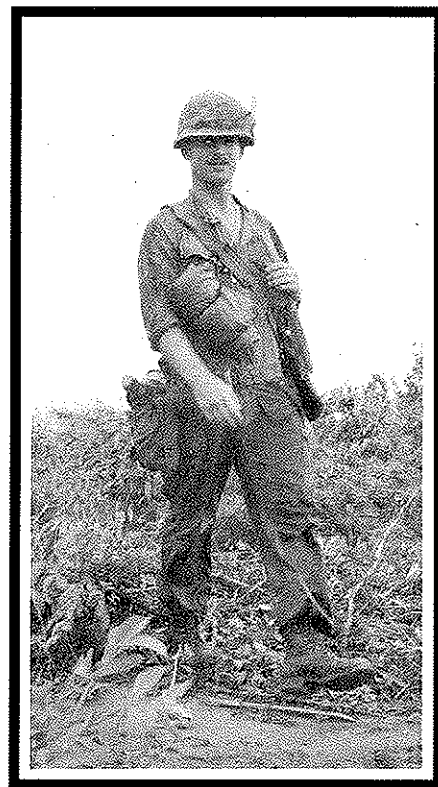
church and he wanted to talk with me. He wanted me to preach for him the next morning. What a shock. God had not only heard that mud-covered soldier on that starry night say that he would preach, but He was holding me to it!

I knew nothing of preaching. I knew nothing of outlines, of homiletics and such. I only knew that I must answer, "Yes, I will do it."

The next morning was every bit as frightening as a firefight when an elder of that church called on me to take the stand for the first time. I stayed in the pulpit less time than it would take eight men to board a helicopter in a hot LZ. I read as my text Psalm 46 pausing at verse 10, "Be still and know that I am God."

Delilah, Deah and I returned to our families in West Virginia, back to the home and church that had prayed for and nurtured me. Reverend Billy Samms was the new pastor who took me under his wing and gave me opportunities to preach.

He often took me with him to state and local conferences where they would always call on him to preach or say something, but instead



Ron Scott heads back to the bush.



of preaching, he would say to the people that he had brought a young man with him who had been called to preach while in Vietnam and that he wanted to give his time to him. I would take the stand and preach.

On the first day of May 1971, I was licensed to preach at Chapman Memorial FWB Church in Harts, West Virginia, by the Logan County Conference of Free Will Baptists. A year later I was ordained by the same conference and charged to preach the gospel.

### Another Army, Another War

I had a deep hunger to know the scriptures and to better equip myself for the calling God had placed within me. I loved to preach and would at the drop of a hat. But I found myself struggling to bring a meaningful message.

Ten years out of high school, we now had another beautiful daughter, Shara Lanay. Being prompted and encouraged by Jack Williams who was then the academic dean at California Christian College in Fresno, California, we packed all we could get into a 1973 Buick and enrolled at CCC. I also enrolled at West Coast Bible College and graduated three and one-half years later with a bachelor of arts degree, with a major in Christian education and a minor in Bible. During this time our

third child Myron was born and is today preaching the gospel.

After pastoring in churches in California, West Virginia, Georgia and now North Carolina, I have found a home among the people at Laurel FWB Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. I am amazed that God would need to escort me halfway around the world just to bring me where I am today.

Did any good come from a war that so many protested and criticized? I like to think that it did. For far away in the delta swamps of Vietnam, not only do large white lilies lift their heads and bloom above the leech-laden mire, but just as amazing, God calls men to preach His word from this sin-ridden, death-cursed world.

Two million seven hundred thousand young Americans fought in that war and one day, 30 years ago, many of us boarded what we called a Freedom Bird that brought us home. It took us far away from a land of war, death, pain and tears. Away from a land where the enemy would never let us rest nor give us any peace.

I do not think I will ever forget looking down to those leech-infested waters for the last time. Peering out the window of that plane, I felt the powerful thrust of that Freedom Bird lift me from the shores and shadows of a polluted land entrenched in war.

I pulled myself close to the window.

The land below became more and more distant. I closed my eyes, and yet, I could still see others struggling in muck and mire. I could hear the sound of constant gunfire and feel the impact of heavy artillery shaking the earth. I could hear distant cries for mercy that seemed to sound the same whether they came from yellow lips, black lips or white lips.

The Freedom Bird tilted its wing, set its nose to the sun and bore me off. And when the sun had dried my tears, when my mind had been cleared from the corruption below, I myself had been raptured. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Ron Scott pastors Laurel Free Will Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He and his wife Delilah have three children.

#### Citations

When Pastor Scott returned from Vietnam, he had been awarded the following medals, honors and designations:

- ★ Vietnam Service Medal with 2 Bronze Service Stars
- ★ National Defense Service Medal
- ★ Bronze Star Medal
- ★ Air Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters
- ★ Combat Infantryman Badge
- ★ Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal
- ★ Expert (rifle)
- ★ Good Conduct Medal

#### Children in His Service

- My older daughter Deah, along with her husband Rodney Hutchinson and our grandson Johnathan, is a member of the church I pastor.
- My younger daughter Shara is the wife of Billy Bevan who pastors Camden FWB Church, a mission work in Kingsland, Georgia. Shara and Billy have given us two grandsons, Bradley and Brandon.
- My son Myron works with Reverend Dann Patrick at Faith FWB Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina.

— Ron Scott —



Blue fire fueled by a refinery explosion burned off his hard hat.

# No Reason Not to Die

By Ron Parker



**J**anuary 18, 2000. I had just made it home in time to watch the 10:00 p.m. news and wasn't paying much attention until the newscaster said there had been an explosion and fire at the Pennzoil Refinery in Shreveport. My thoughts turned immediately to 46-year-old Thomas Brown, an employee of Pennzoil who attends our church.

Thomas was in church the Sunday before, but I couldn't remember if he was working the night shift this week. The newscaster then reported that one employee had been critically injured. That employee was Thomas Brown.

I called the LSU Medical Burn Center to see if Thomas had been taken there. I then called some men of the church and asked if they would meet

me at the hospital. My wife Elaine began calling church members to put Thomas on a prayer list.

## Blue Fire

When I arrived at the hospital, Thomas' two sons and Denise (his ex-wife) met me. Doctors had told the family they did not expect Thomas to make it through the night. He had suffered second and third degree burns over 86 percent of his body.

Thomas had been riding his bike through the refinery when he noticed a small fire on one of the pumps. He returned with a fire extinguisher to help the co-worker who manned the pump extinguish the blaze. The co-worker had already left the area.

Thomas said he heard a large explosion and saw a blue ball of fire coming straight at him.

"I couldn't run so I just squatted down. The ball of fire laid me out flat and burned off my hard hat and everything else. I couldn't get away from it. I was one scared puppy. It was raw, naked fear. I remember praying, 'Oh, God, please don't let me die right here in this dirt,' but there was no reason not to die," Thomas said.

He had taken a deep breath and held it just before the flames hit him; that breath probably saved his life.

A co-worker found Thomas in an



unlit, secluded area of the refinery and took him on a golf cart to emergency personnel who began treatment to save his life. The following weeks were filled with surgery, physical therapy and pain.

Three months after the accident, Thomas walked out of the hospital. He would continue physical therapy. There would be more surgeries. The pain would still be there. Nevertheless, Thomas' faith would give him strength to continue.

## Spared . . . Again

A native of Rhode Island, Thomas began attending our church for the simple fact that his daughter-in-law and new grandson were attending. After the daughter-in-law moved, Thomas continued to attend occasionally.

Thomas said, "I started coming to Heritage FWB Church to see my grandson, but although he quit coming, I continued coming to hear the pastor preach the Word."

While I visited him at home, Thomas told the story of the accident and how God had spared his life . . . and not just in this fire. He'd had a valve replaced in his heart, had been hit head-on by a pickup while riding his motorcycle and had been in a shooting. He said God was with him each of those times, but he had not been thankful to God for sparing his life.

His testimony was quite moving, and I asked if he would give it at church. He agreed that he would when he had healed more and was not quite so disfigured from the burn.

The following week Tom came by the church and said, "Preacher, the Lord left me this way and I should not be ashamed of it. I'm not going to worry that my head is ugly. I don't have to look pretty for Him; I want the Lord to know I'm doing my part. He did His. I'm ready to give my testimony when you are."

## The Testimony

I scheduled him to speak July 9. The *Shreveport Times* newspaper has a column each week for church announcements. I sent in an announcement that Thomas would be giving his testimony and thought some of his friends and co-workers would read it and come listen to his testimony.

I received a call from a reporter who wanted to do a follow-up story from the one they did when Thomas was burned. Two TV stations called to see if they could come to the service and do a story. What an exciting day we had.

Tom spoke for about 30 minutes, saying very little about the personal pain and suffering that he had gone through. He spent most of the time praising God and telling people they "better get right with God."

He said, "If people say, 'Boy, you were lucky,' I say it has nothing to do with luck. I was blessed by God."

When he finished, an invitation was given and the altars were full. Thirteen of Tom's friends and co-workers were present for the service. Some of those, Tom said, probably had not been in church in many years.

Besides the newspaper story on Friday prior to the service, his story was told on the 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. news Sunday, and 6:00 a.m. news Monday morning.

Thomas, an avid motorcyclist, was concerned that he probably could not ride his bike again. What a blessing to see him ride into the church parking lot on his motorcycle. Thomas sits in service with his special burn suit on, a smile on his face and "thankful to be alive."

When I greet him with, "Tom, it's good to see you," he always replies, "Preacher, it is good to be able to be seen." He is a personal encouragement to me as I see the smile on his face and his attentiveness during the sermon followed by a, "Thank you for that sermon," as he leaves. ■



ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Ron Parker pastors Heritage Free Will Baptist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana.

**Editor's note:** Pastor Parker said that through the fire ordeal, Thomas and his ex-wife Denise have connected again.

## BEYOND BELIEF





# How to Make Special Events



By Bob Thomas

**W**ill you raise the expectation level for your next special event? Will you expect God to do miraculous things in your next revival, Bible conference or evangelistic effort? Are the days of great results through special events over? Will God still do mighty things in and through His people? How you answer these questions determines whether you should have that next revival, conference or evangelistic emphasis.

If the days of great events are over, why bother? If not, why play at it? People are too busy for meaningless religious activity. Needs are too great to go very long without God's mighty power working among us.

Stop right here and read two verses of scripture before you proceed—

II Chronicles 16:9 and Hebrews 13:8. These passages promise that God still wants to do mighty things among His people. He longs to perform powerful acts of redemption and revival in us and through us.

## Preparation for Success

Every farmer knows that a good crop is the result of two things—God's providence and the farmer's hard work. Expecting a spiritual harvest where critical preparatory work has been ignored makes no more sense than a farmer expecting to reap a crop in a neglected field. If special events are going to reach their divine potential, we must work hard and work smart in pre-event preparation.

## Preparation through Defining the Purpose

What do you hope to accomplish through your next event? Why have that fall or spring revival? Understanding the reason for the event is essential for the success of the event.

Will you spend time fasting and praying to get on the same page with God? God will help you set goals for your next special emphasis. The success of the event depends on knowing and articulating the biblical reason for the event.

## Preparation through Fasting and Prayer

Will you dedicate time to congre-



gational fasting and praying for God to do a mighty work in a special event? Scriptures and sermons dedicated to the subject of fasting and praying abound. But we must do more than preach, listen and read.

We must actually fast and pray! God has given us a powerful tool to move Heaven and earth. I have been in meetings where the congregation fasted and prayed. I have been in many more where they did not. The difference is always obvious.

Elijah was a normal human being just like us. He had a nature like ours. The effectiveness of Elijah's ministry was directly tied to his intense commitment to prayer. Elijah didn't send or withhold the rain. That was a miracle of God.

However, the mighty convincing work of God took place because one righteous man was committed to fervent prayer. Will you call your church to fasting and prayer for the success of your next special meeting?

### Preparation through Participation

Will fasting and praying be followed by congregational participation in all aspects of the event? God expects man to work with Him. Jesus called His disciples to pray for laborers to work so the harvest would not rot in the fields. Jesus gave men the commission to preach the gospel and make disciples.

Paul insists that we are God's fellow workers, working together with Him. God in His sovereignty has commissioned His people to participate with Him in His work. Nothing monumental happens without God and man working together.

The potential for great results via special events is directly related to the mutual involvement of God and man. God and man working together is God's unchanging will. The greater the participation the greater the success. God will do great things in us, for us, through us and with us, but He will not do anything great without us.

### Preparation through Identifying the Prospects

Who is supposed to benefit from

this meeting? A key for the success of the special event is compiling a personal prospects list. The church should provide a prospect form with a place for five to seven names. This form should be small enough to fit into a shirt pocket.

If the event is dedicated to evangelism, the list should be made up of people who need the Lord. This list should not include "long distance" people. The prospect list provides direction for praying and "bridge building."

*Becoming a Contagious Christian* by Bill Hybels and Mark Mettleburg develops the theme of bridge building. Buy the book, read chapter seven, and build some bridges.

### Preparation through Promotion

How will you promote this special time? Promotion is vital. Promotion highlights the purpose and potential. Promotion emphasizes fasting and praying. Promotion calls attention to the prospect list. Promotion urges people to build bridges.

Promotion challenges people to attend and bring their new friends to the event. Promotion should take place in every service.

Promotion can include banners, bulletin stuffers, posters and personal testimonies. Testimonies should address expectation, importance and personal commitment to participate for the success of the event.

### Preparation for the Presentation

The event is the vehicle for the presentation of biblical truth. Excellence in the event is crucial. From the greeting and welcome to the closing comments and dismissal, the entire event should be well planned to ensure excellence.

Psalms 33 calls for "skill" in music in the worship service. Excellence cannot be confined to music alone. It is the standard for everything we do. Excellence must mark our special events. Every part of the event should be top notch, not showy or gaudy, but excellent.

There should be excellence in the facility. This does not mean state-of-the-art architecture. It does mean facilities that are well lit, clean and neat. It does mean mowed yards, well-

stocked and impeccably clean restrooms. It does mean spotless and well-staffed nurseries.

God deserves our best. Our society demands a level of excellence in these areas that cannot be ignored. Let excellence be the standard for the special event. Prepare with excellence!

### Preparation for Preservation

No farmer plants, waters, cultivates and reaps without definite plans for preserving the harvest. Will you plan to preserve the harvest? Will you have solid practical methods and tools for effective follow up? If there is faith that God is going to do something great, there must be faithfulness to take care of the blessings He gives.

If the event is evangelistic, when will you baptize the new converts? Will there be membership classes or discipleship programs? Will there be a physical place and time dedicated for these purposes?

The preparation for follow up reinforces and compliments the value of the event. We must make sure that there is a comprehensive plan to preserve and nourish the blessings of God.

### Prepare to Reap

Special events can and should catapult congregations up to new levels of effectiveness in the kingdom of God. Churches should have times of special emphasis for the right reasons. We are too busy to just do something and we are too needy to just do nothing. God help us to anticipate and prepare for the good things He will do for us, in us and through us by way of special events . . . and then let's put the crop in the barn. ■



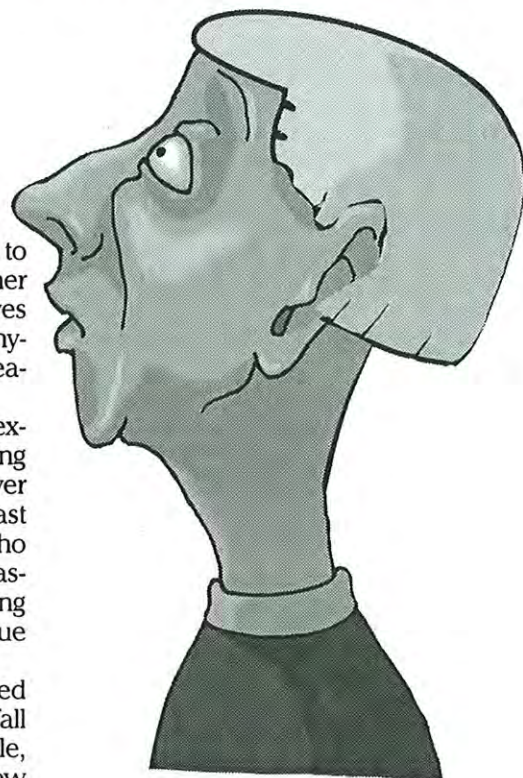
ABOUT THE WRITER: Reverend Bob L. Thomas is a full-time evangelist who resides in Oklahoma.



A teen confronts his own fears when Parkinson's Disease targets his grandfather.

# Disease Plays No Favorites

By Aaron Chaney



"Something is terribly wrong!" Mother sobbed as she tried to straighten her thoughts. What could possibly have my mother this disgruntled? "Grandpa has been rushed to the hospital," she continued. "He collapsed mowing the yard and can't even walk or talk right now. We don't know what's wrong but I'll call you as soon as we know something."

*How could she do this to me?* I thought as she hung up. At that point, I would rather have not known anything until they knew what was wrong. Now I had to sit racking my brain wondering just what happened to the most kind, gentle, caring man I knew.

The clock seemed to cease marking time as I guarded the phone waiting for the call. When Mother called, I was emotionally drained and on the verge of tears. The news I received that day has been a learning experience that changed my thinking about life and the everyday choices I make.

Only days before, my 70-year-old grandfather was a healthy, energetic, eager-to-do gentleman. Now there was a grip on him that he couldn't rise above. To see him lying in a hospital bed unable to gather his thoughts or utter a full sentence without the help of others was almost unbearable. His inability to keep his balance kept him bedridden.

Soon doctors gave us a diagnosis that both relieved us and devastated us at the same time. My grandfather was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, not life-threatening, but the crippling effects of this disease would be difficult to cope with physically and mentally. Among the worst side effects were tremors, inability to speak, loss of memory and loss of balance.

The new life we all now have to lead changed not only my grandfather but everyone close to him. Our lives underwent a drastic change, but anything to help my grandfather was reason enough to change in my eyes.

This has been a major learning experience for me. My thoughts on living everyday life to its fullest have never been more prominent than in the last two years. In my eyes, this man who was a portrait of strength and masculinity, now reduced to barely pulling himself out of bed, makes me value the simple tasks of everyday life.

Never again will I take for granted being able to go for a jog on a cool fall evening or just the ability to do simple, everyday tasks. The choices I now make in life have been considerably affected just by the thought of what my grandfather is going through. Every decision I make I now ask myself, "Is this making me a better person?" and "Am I doing the best I can?"

As long as I can assure myself of these two things, I know that if I ever am in my grandfather's position, I can look back and say I lived life to its fullest. This new-found motivation drives me every day.

Over the past two years, as is the nature of this disease, my grandfather's condition has worsened. His once-strong body is now barely 120 pounds of skin and bone. He has not been out of bed in three months. Our main concern is no longer enabling him to do everyday tasks, but to control his pain and keep him comfortable.

There is at least one good thing that comes out of diseases like this. That is the learning experience of those so close to the sick. It is obvious that even through his sickness, Grandfather has continued his giving ways.

Thanks to his unfortunate illness, he has shown and taught me more about life than I could have thought possible. For this I thank him. ■



**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Aaron Scott Chaney is an 18-year-old freshman at Sindair Community College. Both Aaron and his grandfather (Hershel Nabors) are members of First Dayton Free Will Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio.

This essay was originally written by Aaron for a college class in dedication to his grandfather.



## Arkansas Legend, Reverend Rupert Pixley, Dies



FORT SMITH, AR—Long-time Arkansas pastor, evangelist and church organizer Rupert Pixley died October 31, 2000. He was 80. Reverend Pixley was a Free Will Baptist minister for 63 years, ordained to preach on August 5, 1939, in Rudy, Arkansas. He helped organize 26 churches in seven states.

More than 900 people, including 50 Free Will Baptist ministers, filled First FWB Church in Fort Smith November 5 to honor the man who gave six decades of his life to the cause of Christ and the Free Will Baptist denomination. Pixley pastored 44 years at First Church before retiring in 1991.

At the time of his death, he was

back in the pastorate again at Bethlehem FWB Church in Van Buren. A few days before his death, he sent word to the Oklahoma State Association of Free Will Baptists meeting near Tulsa, "I'm ready to go. I'll meet you in Heaven."

In addition to pastoral work, Pixley served 23 years on the Arkansas CTS Board, was a member of the state Executive Committee and state moderator. He also moderated Zion Hope and Unity Associations, and served five years on the national Home Missions Board. His leadership responsibilities included local church, district, state and national duties.

Rupert and twin brother Gilbert Pixley preached and sang together from their youth. For 48 years, Rupert conducted a radio program. He pastored eight churches (all in Arkansas), baptized more than 3,000 converts, preached 6,000 funerals, performed more than 1,000 weddings and served as director of personnel for three nursing homes.

He said that on his first Sunday at First FWB Church in Fort Smith back in July 1947, the Sunday School offering totaled 27¢, the

church offering \$4.35. He was 27 years old and within 10 years would lead the congregation to build a 700-seat auditorium, to be followed in 1984 by a 16,000-square-foot multi-purpose building.

Brother Pixley befriended numerous young ministers. His was a leading voice to encourage the building of Camp Beaverfork near Conway for a state conference center. He always looked ahead, promoted unity among the churches and was respected denomination-wide by his peers.

Reverends Lawnie Coffman and David Joslin officiated at the funeral. Two grandsons, Randall Ray and Benny Pixley, Jr., spoke in tribute about their grandfather.

Reverend Pixley is survived by his wife Gladys Marie Pixley; three daughters, LaBetha Parks of Springfield, TN, Aletha Ray of Alma and Emmetta Hawkins of Van Buren; two sons, Ben Pixley of Van Buren and Harlan Pixley of Fort Smith; a twin brother, Rev. Gilbert Pixley; two sisters, Belva Dodd of Van Buren and Leah Atwell of Fort Smith; 13 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren.



# Leadership Conference Meets in Nashville

NASHVILLE, TN—Some 135 Free Will Baptist state and national leaders met at Regal Maxwell House on December 4-5 using as a theme, "Mobilizing Our Work . . . Maximizing Our Walk." Two attorneys and two former National Association moderators led discussion sessions.

Nashville attorney Frank Ingraham addressed the attendees twice on the legal liability of national agency directors and associational moderators.

Oklahoma attorney Ron Barber, a member of the Board of Retirement and Insurance, keynoted the Tuesday evening agenda while speaking on the "Legal Liability of National Board Members."

National Association clerk Keith Burden led a 60-minute session Tuesday morning on the "Responsibility of Associational Clerks."

Seven state promotional officers participated in a lively panel discussion chaired by Board of Retirement director William Evans. Discussion focused on the responsibility of the state promotional personnel.

Monday and Tuesday evenings featured major addresses by former moderators Robert Picirilli and Bobby Jackson. The Gospeliers Quartet (which includes Picirilli and Jackson) sang each evening.

Attendees left the hotel Tuesday afternoon at 1:00 p.m. and motored to nearby Joelton for groundbreaking ceremonies at the new campus site for Free Will Baptist Bible College.

The National Association's Nominating Committee met Tuesday afternoon to consider board and commission vacancies for the 2001 national convention. David Joslin chairs the committee.

Moderator Carl Cheshier chaired a Monday afternoon meeting with chairmen of all national boards.

The 2001 Leadership Conference is scheduled December 3-4 at the Regal Maxwell House. Hotel officials notified Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington that the property will be under new management and will have a new name by next December.



**Evangelist Bobby Jackson (NC).**



**Home Missions Board member James Puckett (L) and Moderator Carl Cheshier.**



**Attorney Frank Ingraham (R) speaks with South Carolina moderator Sherwood Lee.**



**Illinois pastor Mark Shores (L) and Loyd Locklear (MI).**



**Board of Retirement director William Evans leads Tuesday morning panel discussion.**





**Clerk Keith Burden.**



**Foreign Missions staffer Don Robirds (standing) talks with Earl Hendrix (SC) and Lynn Wood (OK).**



**Melvin Worthington (L), Tim York and Jeff Crabtree.**



**WNAC Executive Secretary Marjorie Workman (L), Jo Ann King (NC).**



**Layman Raymond Lee (L) and Loyd Locklear.**



**Debe and Dave Taylor (L) with Clarence Lewis.**

**The Gospeliers Quartet: Gene Waddell (L), Bobby Jackson, Robert Picirilli, James Earl Raper, pianist Jean Lewis.**



**Registration Coordinator Dari Goodfellow speaks with Steve Pate (L) and Arizona moderator George Harvey, Jr.**



**Reverend and Mrs. William Smith, Georgia Executive Secretary.**



**Convention Manager Dean Jones wins smiles from Dari Goodfellow (L) and Melody Hood.**



## North Carolina Church Treats Halloween

RALEIGH, NC—Members of Haven FWB Church in Raleigh decided to turn Halloween, a night many consider the devil's holiday, into an opportunity to witness. They call it "Tract and Treat" night.

Pastor Jim Summerson said, "We bought 200 white paper lunch bags and filled them with gospel tracts and candy treats. We made labels with our church name, address and phone number, and sealed the bags with the labels."

Summerson said that members were encouraged to dress up as Bible characters and go out tracting and treating.

Participants gathered at the church by 6:30 p.m. on Halloween night and went door to door distributing tracts and treats.

Pastor Summerson said, "The response was friendly and people seemed pleased and impressed. There was not one negative response. We also gave the bags to all the trick-or-treaters we met. Our people returned encouraged and excited. We are already planning for next year."

The church will add a best Bible character costume contest next Halloween. They also plan to encourage children to accompany parents. Everyone will then meet back at the church for pizza and refreshments.

Brother Summerson said, "This was the easiest door-knocking I've ever done!"

## Bible College Breaks Ground for New Campus

JOELTON, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College officials broke ground December 5 paving the way for the construction of a new \$18-million campus.

Approximately 700 gathered on the summit of the 123-acre site, braving the cold, to witness the historic event. The groundbreaking was hosted by Rev. Roy Harris, director of advancement, who introduced President Tom Malone and others on the program, who included Board Chairman Gary Fry, Missionary TECH Team President Birne Wiley, NAFWB Executive Secretary Melvin Worthington, honorary relocation campaign chairman Bobby Jackson, and Student Body President Darin Miles.

Representatives from the offices of Metro Nashville Mayor Bill Purcell and Tennessee Congressman Bob Clement also brought greetings.

Phase I of construction, scheduled to begin early this year, will include an administration building/library complex, two dormitories, a gymnasium/maintenance facility,

a classroom building, and a dining hall/student center. A childcare facility and a missionary-in-residence home are also planned.

Completion of Phase I is envisioned for August 2002, but could be impacted by the sale of the present campus and the success of fundraising efforts. The \$13.5-million conditional contract to buy the West End campus has been withdrawn because of scheduling conflicts, but several buyers, including the original buyer, are now vying for the opportunity to buy the campus.

Mr. Harris says, "It was a cool day in December, but everyone went home with hearts warmed by what God did on this historic day." He added, "It was great to have our denomination's leaders and other friends of the college there, many of whom traveled many miles to join us for this special occasion."

The groundbreaking was held in conjunction with the annual Free Will Baptist Leadership Conference.



Official groundbreaking moment for the new FWBBC campus. (L) Darin Miles, student body president; Dr. Charles Thigpen, former president; Roy Harris, director of advancement; Dr. Tom Malone, president; Gary Fry, chairman/Board of Trustees; Sandy Goodfellow, relocation committee chairman.



## Bob Hill, Master's Men Founder, Dies



NASHVILLE, TN—Dr. Robert C. Hill who founded and was the first director of Master's Men Department died December 6, 2000, in St. Louis. He was 71.

Dr. Hill also organized and served as director of the Free Will Baptist Executive Bond Program. He later served as assistant editor of *Moody Monthly* magazine in Chicago, and executive editor of *Christian Life* magazine in Wheaton, Illinois.

In 1973 he founded Cross Roads Publications, *Christian Review* magazine and *Evangelical Review* magazine in Atlanta. A prominent author, Bob wrote, edited and published more than 60 books.

One of his most influential efforts was a compilation of the popular newspaper columns, "Why Do the Heathen Rage?" More than 470,000 copies of this book have been distributed worldwide.

Dr. Hill was a Missouri native, born April 29, 1929. He received Christ as his Savior at age eight and was baptized by his grandfather who was also a minister.

Bob was ordained as a Free Will Baptist preacher at age 18, and shortly thereafter began his pastoral ministry at Berkley FWB Church in Berkley, MO. He later pastored six churches in Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia. At the time of his death, he was associate pastor at Donelson FWB

Church in Nashville.

Dr. Hill was a key participant in distributing thousands of Bibles around the world. He chaired the Board of Metro Atlanta Youth for Christ, was a member of the Advisory Council at Southwestern Theological Seminary, and served on the Board of Regents at Oxford Graduate School.

Funeral services were conducted December 9 at Donelson FWB Church. Reverend Robert Morgan officiated.

Dr. Hill is survived by his wife of 53 years, Georgia Barr Hill; three sons, Terry Hill of Dayton, TN, Robert C. Hill II of Mt. Juliet, TN, and Ruston Hill of Signal Mountain, TN; one daughter, Sherry Hill Camp of Peachtree City, GA; one sister, Norma Kennedy of Arnold, MO; and two brothers, Rev. William Hill of Crossville, TN, and Dr. Don Hill of Montgomery, AL.

## 286 Attend Bible College's Welcome Days

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College's Office of Enrollment Management reports that 286 visitors registered for the school's fall Welcome Days, the semi-annual event that gives prospective students an opportunity to get a sample of Bible college life. Visitors came from 79 churches and 17 states.

The largest state delegation was from Tennessee (44), followed by North Carolina (33) and Florida (28). The largest group from a church was 10 from Bethel FWB Church in Kinston, NC.

In addition to visiting classes and enjoying concerts and basketball games, Welcome Days guests were participants in the "Christmas In November" theme that dominated the event.

The next Welcome Days is scheduled for March 29-31. For information, write or call:

**Welcome Days**  
**Free Will Baptist Bible College**  
**3606 West End Avenue**  
**Nashville, TN 37205**  
**1-800-75-FWBBC**

## Reverend John Schebaum Dies

WAYNESVILLE, MO—Missouri minister Reverend John Schebaum died July 7, 2000, at age 81. Converted in 1955, he was ordained as a deacon, then answered the call to preach in 1963.

During his 37-year ministry, Rev. Schebaum pastored six Free Will Baptist churches in Missouri and one in Tennessee. He also served as supply pastor for several churches. He maintained an active tape ministry and Bible study at two nursing homes.

At the time of his death, Brother Schebaum was a member of First FWB Church in Waynesville where Elmer Turnbough pastors.

Pastor Turnbough said, "I met Brother John in 1956 in St. Louis. He truly loved the Lord, the Free Will Baptist denomination and the church program. He was a strong missions supporter."

Turnbough explained, "He supported my two missionary children and left means to continue supporting them after his death."





## FWBBC Selects "Who's Who" Seniors

NASHVILLE, TN—The names of 19 FWBBC seniors will be included in the 2000-01 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*, according to the publisher. Students are recommended for the honor by their teachers, who consider such criteria as grades, spiritual maturity, extracurricular activities and potential.

They join an elite group of students from more than 2,300 colleges and universities in all 50 states, Washington, DC, and several foreign countries.

Angela Crain, Beechwood, NB, Canada  
Bethany Crowson, Nashville, Tennessee  
Adam Davis, Altamont, Illinois  
Kelly Guyton, Colona, Illinois  
Will Hall, Garner, North Carolina (posthumous)  
Alyssa Hampton, Nashville, Tennessee  
Allison Hood, Birmingham, Alabama  
Hope Humbles, Ayden, North Carolina  
Kristin Jewell, Macon, Georgia  
Jack Kettelman, Nashville, Tennessee  
Steven Lewis, Nashville, Tennessee  
Victoria Lindsey, Chester, Georgia  
Darin Miles, Florence, South Carolina  
Sarah Pittman, Oreana, Illinois  
Nicole Platt, Batesville, Arkansas  
Jeremiah Riggs, Pleasant View, Tennessee  
Gary Roe, Boons Camp, Kentucky  
Jeremy Thomas, Albany, Georgia  
Jonathan Turnbough, Durham, North Carolina

## Bible College Hosts "Jonathan Thigpen Day"

NASHVILLE, TN—Free Will Baptist Bible College honored one of its most notable alumni by declaring December 1, 2000, "Dr. Jonathan Thigpen Day" on campus.

The 1973 alumnus has had rich ministry in evangelism, youth ministry, writing and education. He currently serves as executive director of the Evangelical Training Association based in Wheaton, Illinois.

For the last four years, Jonathan has battled ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) that has left him increasingly weakened physically. "ALS may kill my body," he told students and scores of guests, "but it cannot kill my soul!"

Long-time friend Rodney Whaley spoke of his relationship with Jonathan as a student and of the evangelistic campaigns they conducted during the 1970s, with Vernon Whaley, as *The Conquerors*.

Jonathan's sister, Mrs. Ann Maines, described him as the kind of brother who made life eventful as they were growing up together.

Dr. Jonathan Thigpen's message to students and guests was one of courage and hope. It was a chapel to be remembered, noted Bert Tippet, the college's public relations director.

At the close, President Tom Malone announced that the college has inaugurated a scholarship in Dr. Thigpen's honor and invited contributions from those whose lives have been enriched by Jonathan's life. Contributions to the scholarship may be made by sending funds to:

The Jonathan Thigpen Scholarship  
c/o Free Will Baptist Bible College  
3606 West End Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37205

## Coming Next Month

- ▶ **The Convention Miracle**
- ▶ **Traditions**
- ▶ **How to Listen to a Sermon**
- ▶ **Somebody Wins, Everybody Loses**
- ▶ **The JFL Story**



# State Association Meetings 2001

State	Date	Time	Place & Address
<b>Alabama</b>	Starts: Nov. 7 Closes: Nov. 9	7:00 p.m. 3:30 p.m.	First FWB Church 54 Twin Street Sylacauga, AL 35150
<b>Arizona District</b>	Starts: March 10 Closes: March 10	10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	Pinnacle Peak FWB Church 7950 West Pinnacle Peak Road Phoenix, AZ 85027
<b>Arkansas</b>	Starts: August 7 Closes: August 8	7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m.	Conway Public School Auditorium 2300 Prince Street Conway, AR 72032
<b>Atlantic Canada District</b>	Starts: June 28 Closes: July 1	7:30 p.m. 7:00 p.m.	St. John Valley Bible Camp Route 5 Hartland N.B. E0J 1N0 Canada
<b>California</b>	Starts: May 17 Closes: May 19	7:30 p.m. 12:00 noon	Fairfield FWB Church 2301 Pennsylvania Avenue Fairfield, CA 94533
<b>Colorado District</b>	Starts: May 19 Closes: May 19	9:30 a.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 320 W. Trilby Road Fort Collins, CO 80525
<b>Florida</b>	Starts: May 9 Closes: May 12	7:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	Holiday Inn Convention Center 350 International Speedway Blvd. Deland, FL 32724 904/738-5200
<b>Georgia</b>	Starts: March 15 Closes: March 17	10:00 a.m. 12:00 noon	Trinity Fellowship FWB Church 700 Upper Woolsey Road Hampton, GA 30228
<b>Idaho</b>	Starts: May 18 Closes: May 19	7:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	Nampa FWB Church 550 W. Locust Lane Nampa, ID 83686
<b>Illinois</b>	Starts: March 16 Closes: March 17	9:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	Pittsburgh FWB Church P. O. Box 39 Pittsburgh, IL 62974
<b>Indiana</b>	Starts: June 15 Closes: June 16	7:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m.	Wabash First FWB Church 1056 Erie Street Wabash, IN 46792
<b>Kansas</b>	Starts: June 7 Closes: June 9	7:30 p.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 600 North Glenn Ulysses, KS 67880
<b>Kentucky</b>	Starts: June 15 Closes: June 16	7:30 p.m. 12:00 noon	Katy Friend FWB Church Prestonsburg, KY 41653
<b>Louisiana District</b>	Starts: Jan. 20 Closes: Jan. 20	10:00 a.m.	Heritage FWB Church 2665 Williamson Way Shreveport, LA 71118
<b>Mexico</b>	Starts: July 27 Closes: July 29		Altamira Tamaulipas Mexico
<b>Michigan</b>	Starts: May 17 Closes: May 19	7:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	Saginaw Plaza Hotel 400 Johnson Street Saginaw, MI 48607 517/753-6608

State	Date	Time	Place & Address
<b>Mid-Atlantic District</b>	Starts: Nov. 3 Closes: Nov. 3	9:30 a.m. 12:00 noon	Welcome Home FWB Church 1303 Prospect Mill Road Belair, MD 21014
<b>Mississippi</b>	Starts: Nov. 2 Closes: Nov. 3	9:00 a.m. 12:00 noon	Fulton FWB Church 824 East Main Street Fulton, MS 38843
<b>Missouri</b>	Starts: June 4 Closes: June 6	7:30 p.m. evening	United FWB Church 607 Lanton Road West Plains, MO 65775
<b>New Jersey District</b>	Starts: March 16 Closes: March 17	7:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	Thompson Memorial FWB Church 1520 South Orchard Vineland, NJ 08360
<b>New Mexico District</b>	Starts: April 5 Closes: April 7	1:30 p.m. 4:00 p.m.	First FWB Church 6601 Leta Road NE Albuquerque, NM 87113
<b>North Carolina</b>	Starts: June 4 Closes: June 5	10:00 a.m. 12:00 noon	Landmark FWB Church 9011 Chapel Hill Road Cary, NC 27513
<b>Northeast District</b>	Starts: June 22 Closes: June 23	4:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 20 Depot Road New Durham, NH 03855
<b>Northwest District</b>	Starts: May 18 Closes: May 19	7:30 p.m. 12:00 noon	Oregon Trail FWB Church 14595 S. Henrici Oregon City, OR 97045
<b>Ohio</b>	Starts: June 22 Closes: June 23	9:30 a.m. 12:00 noon	Gahanna FWB Church 3868 Stygler Road Gahanna, OH 43219
<b>Oklahoma</b>	Starts: Oct. 15 Closes: Oct. 18	7:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 421 S. Ash Ada, OK 74820
<b>South Carolina</b>	Starts: Feb. 22 Closes: Feb. 23	9:30 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	Gilead FWB Church 802 Cockfield Road Scranton, SC 29591
<b>Tennessee</b>	Starts: Nov. 12 Closes: Nov. 14	7:30 p.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 319 Hemlock Street Mountain City, TN 37683
<b>Texas</b>	Starts: June 6 Closes: June 8	7:00 p.m. 12:00 noon	First FWB Church 10331 Veteran's Memorial Drive Houston, TX 75654
<b>Virginia</b>	Starts: June 14 Closes: June 15	7:00 p.m. 9:30 p.m.	Bethel FWB Church 3713 Pennington Lane Woodbridge, VA 22192
<b>West Virginia</b>	Starts: June 8 Closes: June 9	9:30 a.m. 3:00 p.m.	Bradley FWB Church P. O. Box 307 Bradley, WV 25818



# currently

**Blue Point FWB Church** in **Cisne, IL**, celebrated their 103rd anniversary, according to Pastor **Ernie Lewis**. Former pastor **Lonnie Skiles** was guest speaker. The church witnessed seven baptisms.

Pastor **John Hollis** baptized five converts at **Crossroads FWB Church** in **Effingham, IL**. Members of **First FWB Church** in **Mt. Vernon, IL**, honored Pastor **Ronnie Mitchell** for his 11 years of service. The church gave the Mitchell family a grill, a freezer, a \$300 gift certificate to fill the freezer and \$300 cash.

The **Bear Point FWB Church** in **Sesser, IL**, averages 50 youth on Wednesday nights, according to Pastor **Larry Cook**. Two church vans are filled to capacity each week transporting people to services.

Congratulations to **Marie Rutger** who retired after serving 30 years as clerk of **Illinois' East Central Quarterly**.

All-day services helped **First FWB Church** in **Neosho, MO**, celebrate 50 years of service. Pastor **Frank Webber** led the activities and presented plaques of recognition to charter members who were present. Missouri executive secretary **Nathan Ruble** preached the morning message. Three former pastors also attended—**Jim McCully**, **Lester Nutting** and **Robert Williams**. The church began as a mission in 1950 (an outgrowth of a revival meeting), organized on November 26 and elected Roy Alyea as its first pastor.

Pastor **Jeff Huffman** welcomed members and visitors to the 78th homecoming day at **First FWB Church** in **Fredericktown, MO**. The church organized in 1922 with 43 members. Evangelist **T. C. Ferguson** directed that organizational meeting.

**Rejoice FWB Mission** in **Columbia, MO**, dedicated a new sanctuary, according to Pastor **Steve Reeves**. Director of Missouri Missions **Dale Skiles** preached the dedication message.

The **Free Will Baptist Children's**

**Home** in **Eldridge, AL**, named **Randy Key** as director. He grew up a mile from the home, attended Florence State University, eventually earning a master's degree. He later taught school and coached eight years, worked in a management position at Drummond Coal Company and pastored.

**First FWB Church** in **Hutchinson, KS**, has been worshiping in an elementary school after selling their property and waiting on a special use permit from the city planning commission to build on a new location. **Larry Collins** pastors.

**Greater Vision FWB Church** in **Wichita, KS**, organized September 17, 2000. The church meets at Holiday Inn Airport, averages 25 in attendance and an \$800 weekly offering. Pastor **Dale McCoy** reports two conversions. The church joined the East Kansas Quarterly Conference.

Pastor **Leonard Pirtle** reports 10 conversions, 26 baptisms and 34 new members at **Rejoice FWB Church** in **Owasso, OK**. The church's Christian school enrolled 507 students in K-8th grade programs. Two staff members were added to the church, and plans are underway to build a teen center west of their gymnasium. Pirtle has led the church for 25 years.

Pastor **Homer Brooks** reports six conversions at **South Charleston FWB Church** in **South Charleston, OH**.

**First FWB Church** in **Austintown, OH**, reports 29 conversions, 14 baptisms and 15 new members. Their Vacation Bible School registered 154 children who raised \$1,304 for Home Missionary Tommy Jones' land fund. **Bruce Beal** pastors.

Three conversions and six new members have Pastor **Cecil Farmer** smiling at **Liberty FWB Church** in **Norton, OH**. The church purchased a 15-passenger van to transport people to services.

Pastor **Jim Thompson** reports five conversions, two new members, four

baptisms and attendance topping 80 at **North Woodbury FWB Church** in **Mt. Gilead, OH**.

Some 220 people attended homecoming services at **Heritage FWB Church** in **Columbus, OH**. Pastor **Tim Stout** led ground-breaking activities for a new church.

Pastor **Grover Caudill** baptized seven people at **White Oaks FWB Church** in **Marion, OH**.

**Antioch FWB Church** in **Wheelersburg, OH**, turned 125 years old and celebrated the event with communion and feet washing. **Roy Bennett** pastors.

**Heartland Christian Academy** opened last fall as an outreach of **Heartland Union FWB Church** in **Plain City, OH**. **Dana Booth** pastors.

**Southwest FWB Church** in **Columbus, OH**, reports nine new members and completion of their fellowship hall. Another building addition is scheduled for this spring. **John Meade** pastors.

**Gahanna FWB Church** in **Gahanna, OH**, burned the mortgage on their new building, according to Pastor **Curtis Booth**. The congregation witnessed six conversions, four baptisms and four rededications.

Pastor **Cyrus Shoffner** drove away from the Sunday night service in a new Nissan Frontier pick-up truck, thanks to the generous members of **Faith FWB Church** in **Darlington, SC**.

One more pastor goes online with a new computer. The pastor is **Jake Creech** at **Horse Branch FWB Church** in **Turbeville, SC**.

Pastor **Richard Conyers** needed a car, so he bought a 1997 Pontiac. The next week members of **Lockhart FWB Church** in **Lockhart, SC** gave him a check that covered the entire cost . . . including tax. ■



Is it possible to have a growing Men's Ministry these days? Let me share with you a few key principles that will help you attract and keep men coming to Master's Men.

### *Personally Invite Men to Come*

Men typically do not respond to announcements in the church bulletin or flyers. Men are more apt to come if they are personally invited by a friend to participate. Those in roles of leadership in Master's Men chapters need to develop a system that personally invites every man who attends their churches. If you want your Master's Men to grow, plan to invite three times the number of men who regularly attend.

### *Share the Leadership of the Group*

Men's ministry in the local church most often fails because they are usually initiated and led by one individual rather than a team of leaders. The desire and drive of one man may be enough to launch a men's ministry, but it will not be enough to sustain the ministry over a longer period of time. Every Master's Men Chapter needs several men to fulfill leadership roles in order for the ministry to be successful.

### *Maintain an Outreach Mindset*

Many men's groups fail because they become focused inward and exclusive. Inviting new and preferably unchurched men will keep your meetings from becoming static. An unsaved friend or relative may be more open to attending a men's Bible study than attending church. A Master's Men ministry could be an instrument to reach men who need the Lord.

### *Watch Your Time and Place*

Most people you know are too busy for their own good. They are already overextended when it comes to time. Therefore, they value their time. Evaluating meeting lengths is important, especially if you want to reach unchurched men. Plan not only when your meeting will begin but also when it will end, and be prompt on both ends.

I suggest that the focus of your meeting be inspirational (Bible study and prayer) rather than having a

## *How to have a Growing Men's Ministry*

**By Tom Dooley, General Director**

business meeting. If your leadership team will put forth the effort, business will be minimal in your meetings.

Meeting location is another key consideration. For many unchurched/lost men, a church building is intimidating. Try meeting in a member's home or at a restaurant that would allow you to use a meeting room. If you do meet at church, gather in an area that will accommodate your group comfortably.

### *Help Men Discover Biblical Truth for Themselves*

Bible study should be a primary component of your Master's Men meeting. The Direction Bible Study materials provided by the Master's Men Department are designed to facilitate discussion. The aim is to help men discover what the Bible says by asking questions of the text.

The leader in this case does not need to lecture but to encourage the group to participate while working through the lesson. The setting should be such that each man will be allowed to uncover the truths of God's Word. The leader should seek to aid the process rather than set himself up as an expert.

If you have a men's group in your church, let me encourage you to follow these principles. Let's do as well as we can. Men's souls are at stake. ■

### *Up Coming Master's Men Events:*

Please call Master's Men toll free at 1-877-767-8039 if you would like additional information about any of the following events:

#### **Deep South Golf Tournament**

February 22-24

Dothan, Alabama

54-hole, three-day, two-man scramble tournament

#### **National Master's Men Retreat**

Trinity Camp—Guin, Alabama

April 19-21

#### **Virgin Islands Operation Saturation Missions Trip**

September 15-22

Want to know more about Master's Men? Request an information packet by calling 1-877-767-8039.





## WNAC'S CoLaborer Magazine

By Marjorie Workman

**C**hoices. They confront us daily. In the grocery store you'll find different kinds of cereal, multiple flavors of ice cream and soft drinks suitable for any palate. How do we choose? What about television choices? Which sports, news or talk show do we watch? Choices in books, videos and magazine are endless. There is only one choice in choosing a magazine written for and by Free Will Baptist women—*CoLaborer*.

**O**pportunity for writers. *CoLaborer* magazine is written almost exclusively by Free Will Baptist women. It is open to those creative writers looking for opportunity to celebrate and share their insights on Christian living. It's more than a magazine of monthly programs. Each issue has at least two human interest stories on a variety of subjects.

**L**ook it over. You will like what you see. Subscriptions are on a continuous basis. A complimentary copy for your perusal will be sent upon request. Learn, grow, be challenged, laugh, cry.

**A**dvertize it in your church. Many churches and women may not know there is a Free Will Baptist magazine for women. If you are just starting a Women Active for Christ ministry, you can receive a complimentary copy for all the women in your group.

**B**iblically based. You can count on a sound fundamental approach to all content. *CoLaborer* is a magazine you will want your children or grandchildren to see.

**O**utrageously inexpensive. Check the subscription rates on other Christian publications and you will find that \$8.75 per year makes *CoLaborer* an excellent buy. You can subscribe on an individual basis or as a group. The group rate is slightly less than the individual price. Call 1-877-767-7662 today to get your subscription started.

**R**eaders friendly. Only 32 pages of well-laid out easy to read material. Every issue is informative, refreshing and challenging. There are no Greek or difficult theological terms to digest. No advertising to flip through while looking for the heart and soul. But you will find insightful and soul-searching issues.

**E**ncouraging. Readers can draw strength from the experiences of others. Many articles detail what is happening in the lives of Christian women and how they have found God's grace to be sufficient.

**R**ewarding. In a culture corrupted with vulgarity, it is rewarding to read material that is rich and full of encouragement. Your mind and heart will be stimu-

lated to think pure thoughts, to reflect on God and His Word, and to digest good rather than evil.

**M**inistry oriented. *CoLaborer* serves as a mentoring tool for those interested in learning from the experiences of others. Issues will vary in providing helps and suggestions on how to minister to different people groups, seniors, singles and youth. Guidance is given for observing weeks of prayer for missions.

**A**ppealing. Appearance is important. The magazine's cover is appealing and colorful. The inside pages are well laid out. And more color is being added. In the near future, *CoLaborer* will be a full-color magazine from cover to cover.

**G**ood for growth. The main purpose of *CoLaborer* is to help readers be more effective in ministering to those people God puts in their path. Readers will find ample helpful material to use in carrying their responsibility to go and tell the world the Good News of salvation through Jesus.

**A**dventurous. *CoLaborer* is the only Free Will Baptist magazine for women. And, it is not just for women. Pastors can subscribe and read it, too. Laymen can also glean from the studies, book reviews and stories.

**Z**ip in your meetings? Who doesn't like a little variety in programming? "Springboard" is a regular *CoLaborer* feature that gives innovative ideas for Women Active for Christ officers. The purpose for "Springboard" is like spices to food—to put a little extra zip in your meetings.

**I**nsightful. Interesting. Informational. These are a few descriptive words that readers have used to describe *CoLaborer*. The magazine provides helpful ideas for the officers of Women Active for Christ groups to enable them to carry out their responsibilities better. Also, items needed for the Missionary Provision Closet are listed in each issue.

**N**ewsy. Subscribers are able to keep up with happenings among women's group all across the country. News about retreats and the annual convention are included in *CoLaborer*. Each issue contains evangelism news from around the world.

**E**mphasis on missions. From its conception WNAC women have been excited and involved in missions. Through the years that emphasis has not changed. Often articles are written by missionaries to give insights into their life and ministry. ■

Women Nationally **WNAC** Active for Christ



**R**etirement. The word conjures up images of freedom to travel, lazy days to fish or play golf, time to explore new interests or rekindle old hobbies. Yet, that's only part of the picture.

Excited by visions of the Golden Years, some would-be retirees forget to plan for those years. Planning is crucial, however, since some Americans will spend more years in retirement than in working. It's not enough to plan for the first 10 years of retirement. You must plan for the later years when living becomes harder and inflation squeezes income.

To plan for retirement is one of the most important decisions of your life, and the Board of Retirement and Insurance is a powerful ally. We provide the tools and guidance you need. Our staff will help you make informed decisions to build your future retirement with confidence. We're committed to serving you through a long-term relationship.

Your Board of Retirement's primary purpose is to provide lifetime retirement income for you and your spouse. Because continuing and consistent lifetime income is imperative we generally recommend the annuity option. An annuity, in its simplest terms, is *monthly payments for life*. People choose annuities to protect against the financial risk of inadequate income during retirement years. We offer several other options for those who have different needs.

Retirees benefit in the following ways from an annuity.

- 1) An annuity guarantees an income you cannot outlive. No other alternative savings plan can make this guarantee.
- 2) Once funds are in the annuity pool, no one can invade them for any reason. Should an annuitant or spouse require nursing home care, the providers can seize cash, stocks, bonds, savings and sometimes even real estate to meet expenses. They may take part of the annuity payment, but they can never invade the principal. In case of one's death, joint life annuity payments continue to the surviving spouse.
- 3) The Internal Revenue Service permits retired ordained ministers to designate up to 100% of their Board of Retirement annuity income as housing allowance. The IRS qualifies annuity payments as housing allowance *only from church retirement*

## Retirement

By Ray Lewis

*plans*. This may well be the best financial break pastors receive in retirement.

4) Our annuity plan offers a special advantage. Our annuity tables assume five percent earnings. Each year the fund earnings exceed five percent, the annuitants receive permanent increases in annuity payments. Regardless of our earnings experience, annuity payments can never decrease.

Most other annuity programs do not offer an increase in payments. For example, insurance companies guarantee a set

annuity payment. However, whatever their earnings experience, annuity payments remain the same.

We offer six different annuity options:

*Single Life Annuity.* The annuitant receives a guaranteed monthly payment for his or her lifetime only. Payment ceases at his/her death.

*Single Life Annuity with a 10-Year Guaranty.* Ensures that if the annuitant dies in the first 120 months of retirement, guaranteed payments continue to the estate or named beneficiary until a total of 120 monthly payments has been made. *If the annuitant lives beyond the 120-month period, payments continue until death.*

*Single Life Annuity with a 15-Year Guaranty.* The same as the above except guaranteed payments are made for 180 months.

*Joint Life Annuity.* The annuitant and spouse receive a guaranteed set monthly payment for their lifetime. The payment does not decrease after the first death. Payment ceases only after the death of both annuitant and spouse.

*Joint Life Annuity with a 10-year Guaranty.* The annuitant and spouse receive a guaranteed set monthly payment for their lifetimes. If annuitant and spouse die in the first 120 months of retirement, guaranteed payments continue to the estate or to a named beneficiary until a total of 120 monthly payments has been made. *If the annuitant and/or spouse live beyond the 120-month period, annuity payments continue for life.*

*Joint Life Annuity with a 15-Year Guaranty.* The same as the above except a total of 180 monthly payments is guaranteed.

For more information, call us toll free at 1-877-767-7738. ■

Retirement



& Insurance



**W**illiam Carey . . .  
Adoniram Jud-  
son . . . Hudson  
Taylor . . . Laura Belle  
Barnard . . . Thomas H.  
"Pop" Willey.

These were all mis-  
sionaries! All were peo-  
ple with vision and pur-  
pose. All were used by  
God in marvelous ways.

When James Forlines  
came to the Department  
of Foreign Missions as  
general director in 1999,  
he had a vision, an Acts  
1:8 vision of God's ser-  
vants as witnesses to  
their "Jerusalem, . . .  
Judea, . . . Samaria, and  
. . . unto the uttermost  
part of the earth."

**B**rother James For-  
lines joined his predecessors in urging people  
to get involved in world evangelism. But he  
sounded the note somewhat differently. His mes-  
sage was simple: "mobilize an entire denomination  
. . . to find their place in world outreach."

He has stressed the Great Commission—a man-  
date to His church, not just to Free Will Baptist  
Foreign Missions! Now, to challenge the denomina-  
tion with God's heartbeat and call, Foreign  
Missions has produced a four-part video series en-  
titled "Embracing the Vision." It is scheduled to be  
available by mid-March.

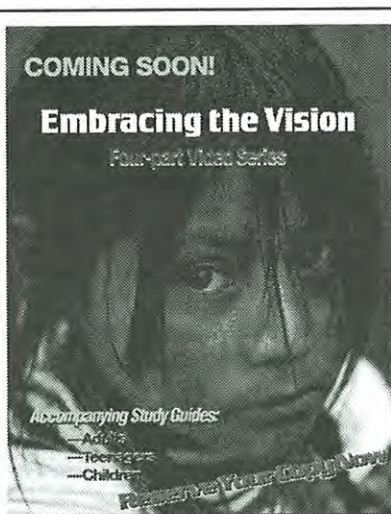
**P**art one focuses on "The Heartbeat of God." It  
takes participants through the Old and New  
Testaments in capsule form, demonstrating  
God's eternal purpose in creating man and allowing  
him the choice of life or death. Then God shows His  
plan to redeem man to himself, as He calls faithful  
Abraham and promises to bless him and to make  
him a blessing to all nations.

Part two centers on "The Crying Need of the  
World." Almost 2000 years have passed since  
Christ reiterated the mandate to make disciples of  
all nations (*ethne* or peoples), yet the task is still  
far from complete. Many unreached peoples are  
still untargeted for evangelization. Some of these  
are offered as challenges for prayer and witness.

Session three draws attention to "The Free Will  
Baptist Response" and presents opportunities the  
denomination has to effectively reach out to our  
world. A paradigm shift in the way Free Will



James Forlines says,  
"We want to help  
every church grow  
and fulfill God's  
vision to reach the  
world with the  
gospel."



## Embracing the Vision

By Don Robirds

Baptists do missions is  
presented. Some have  
grasped the implications  
of such a shift and a  
sense of excitement is  
stirring across the coun-  
try. National ministries  
are making efforts to  
work cooperatively to  
help our churches fol-  
low the Acts 1:8 ap-  
proach to world evangel-  
ism.

**T**he final session of  
this series aims at  
"The Church's Per-  
sonal Involvement." It  
zeros in on the individ-  
ual's responsibility as  
well as possibilities for  
service around the  
world. Personal involve-  
ment and participation

in ministry to the unreached are shown to be key  
elements to mobilizing every Christian for evange-  
lization of the lost at home and around the globe.

This video series is being professionally pro-  
duced and leaders' or teachers' guides are being  
prepared for adults, youth and children. Each  
video section is between 18 and 20 minutes in  
length so discussion and expansion of the subject  
can be done in small groups. Probably the best  
method of use will be four Sunday or Wednesday  
night services or four consecutive Sunday school  
assemblies.

**O**ne videotape holds the entire series. The tape  
and the guides will be provided FREE upon  
request. Hopefully, this will be shown during  
April prior to the **World Missions Offering on April  
29**. Although no obligation is attached, we hope  
our churches will remember that April is the month  
of Foreign Missions emphasis. The efforts to ignite  
a denomination-wide mobilization, including the  
cost of producing this series, need a generous fi-  
nancial response from our churches.

The content of this series lends itself to repeated  
showings with appended discussion perhaps as  
often as twice a year, consequently it should serve  
as an ongoing resource tool for the church.

To order the video series and guides write to  
**Foreign Missions**, P.O. Box 5002, Antioch, TN  
37011-5002, e-mail [heartbeat@nafwb.org](mailto:heartbeat@nafwb.org), check  
out our website at [www.nafwb.org/fm](http://www.nafwb.org/fm) or dial toll  
free 1-877-767-7736.







Garnett Reid

## Amos, the Burden-Bearing Prophet (Part One—Amos 1:1-2)

**T**he one who dies with the most toys wins. The first time I saw that bumper-sticker logic, I remember thinking, “If that’s the case, everyone I know is a loser.” Material prosperity can be one of life’s worst deceptions. While adversity often brings out the best in people, prosperity often reveals their worst.

Amos spoke to a generation drunk with pleasure and high on prosperity. His day saw Israel live the good life to the max. Rich and religious on the outside, the nation was rotten at its spiritual core. A growing, wealthy upper class in Israel exploited the poor and weak, all the while blinded to these and other sins stifling their covenant relationship with God.

Into this setting God sent His servant, Amos. His generation, ministry and message have many parallels with our day. This study will highlight some of these principles so that we can apply them in today’s context. Our study will examine Amos’ prophecy as follows:

1:1 Preface

1:2 Introductory heading

1:3 – 2:16 Indictment of the nations

3:1 – 6:14 Indictment of Israel

7:1 – 9:15 Visions of judgment and hope

The first verse of Amos serves as a preface to the entire work, providing the reader with several important facts. These are “the words of Amos.” The name “Amos” comes from a verb meaning “to bear” or “carry.” Some suggest, therefore, that “Amos” means “burden-bearer”; others take it to mean “carried” or “borne” by the Lord.

Please note that the work claims to be that of Amos, not that of some unknown author or authors. Also keep in mind that while scripture is “God-breathed” (II Tim. 3:16) and divine in nature, it is also the product of human writers with their own styles and personalities evident in what they write.

Amos further identifies himself as a

“herdsman” or shepherd from Tekoa. Later in 7:14, he mentions that he also grew sycamore figs. Apparently he was something of a blue-collar prophet sent to those with lavish, white-collar lifestyles whose appetites craved things, not God. Although his home was in Tekoa, a village five miles south of Bethlehem in Judah, Amos prophesied to the northern kingdom, Israel.

The time of his ministry is also pinpointed for us in verse one: “during the days of Uzziah” in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel. Their reigns overlapped between the years 767-753 B. C. A further comment regarding the date of Amos’ prophecy puts it “two years before the earthquake.”

This earthquake is likely the one mentioned in Zechariah 14:5; archaeological data from sites such as Hazor place the time of the quake around 760 B. C. Amos thus takes his place alongside the great prophets of the eighth century B. C., Isaiah, Micah, Hosea and Jonah in the golden age of biblical prophecy.

Verse two serves as a heading for the entire prophecy. The prophet’s role of covenant prosecutor is evident as he declares the Lord’s message of judgment. Note that he uses the covenant name, “LORD” (Yahweh), in portraying God as a lion “roaring” against the sin of His people (also see 3:8). The Lord speaks from Zion/Jerusalem, His great city synonymous with the covenant relationship He has with Israel through David.

Yet because Israel has failed to keep covenant loyalty, the land suffers God’s curse. The pastures “mourn” and the lush region near Carmel dries up as a result of divine judgment on Israel’s sin.

Even in these two opening verses we discern at least three important themes for our own day.

First, God holds His people accountable for maintaining loyal

hearts of trust in our relationship with Him. If the relationship suffers, the problem is with us, not with God.

Second, when we rebel and violate His trust, the Lord rebukes us by punishing our sin. His chastisement is as much an evidence of His faithfulness as is His blessing.

Third, the very fact of the prophet’s presence and voice, the fact that God sends a messenger to speak to a wayward people, indicates that He has not abandoned us to hopelessness in our rebellion. The sound of the prophet’s voice is thus an echo of the Father’s grace. ■

Writer’s Note: This series on Amos is dedicated to Dr. Jonathan Thigpen, in many ways a prophetic voice to his generation, himself a “burden-bearer” through the Lord’s Spirit.





Melinda Pinson

## Relaxed Availability, Part Two

**L**ast month we began discussing relaxed availability—being renewed, relaxed and refreshed by our communion with Christ so that we might be available to have an impact on others. In this column, I want to discuss two results of this relaxed availability in the life of the pastor's wife: the beauty of human relationships and witness to the watching world.

### Realities

In his book *Two Contents, Two Realities*, Francis Schaeffer says that Christians need to put forth two contents and two realities in the Christian life. The two contents are (1) sound doctrine and (2) honest answers to honest questions.

Yet, he says, the two contents must be accompanied by spiritual *realities* in the believer's life—realities that have an impact on people in the real world. Pastors' wives, who often get tied up in the day-to-day details of family life, work and their husbands' ministries, need to think about these two realities.

### Beauty

The first is true spirituality. Yet, it is the second I want us to focus on. It is a visible part of the "availability" that characterizes the believer who is experiencing daily mind-renewal by Christ: "the beauty of human relationships." Schaeffer says this beauty reveals itself in the fact that "we are to show something to the watching world on the basis of the human relationships we have with other people, not just other Christians."

Think back over the last week and examine yourself in your usual environment—at home, out in the community or at work. Are you characterized by relaxed availability? How would the perfect stranger—let's say the cashier in the grocery store who is just as slow as molasses—see you?

What kind of signal do you send to him or her? Do you express beauty in your human relationships?

Schaeffer says the attitude of true beauty "is to operate on all levels. I meet a man in a revolving door. How much time do I have with him? Maybe ten seconds. I am to treat him well. We look at him. We do not think consciously in every case that this man is made in the image of God, but, having ground into our bones and into our consciousness (as well as our doctrinal statements) that he is made in the image of God, we will treat him well in those ten seconds which we have.

"We approach a red light. We have the same problem. Perhaps we will never see these other people at the intersection again, but we are to remember that they have dignity.

"And when we come to the longer relationships—for example, the employer-employee relationship—we are to treat each person with dignity. The husband-and-wife relationship, the parent-and-child relationship . . . in every single relationship of life, to the extent to which I am in contact with a man or woman, sometimes shorter and sometimes longer, he or she is to be treated in such a way that—man or woman—if he is thinking at all, he will say, 'Didn't he treat me well!'"

Sometimes it is easier to have an attitude of relaxed availability when we are intentional about being worshipful. But what about when we are in a secular setting that is not particularly Christian, coming into contact with mostly strangers?

What kind of impression do we make on them, especially when we don't even know when they are watching us? How do we present ourselves to them? Are we being living Christian witnesses when it is not planned or intentional? Are we showing the beauty of human relationships

to those around us?

### Witness

When the pastor's wife has an attitude of relaxed availability, she will naturally express the beauty of human relationships, not just with church people, but with everyone. She will naturally be a witness.

I used to manage a historic inn and restaurant. Since our clientele was made up of just as many non-Christians as Christians, being a Christian example and trying to have a Christian influence was a daily challenge.

Though I could not always discuss religion with my customers, I tried to create a hospitable atmosphere that Christ would smile upon and one founded on and guided by Christian principles. My prayer was that the love of Christ would shine through our efforts even though all my staff members were not committed Christians.

We would provide guests with comment cards, so that we could receive feedback from guests on their overall experience. One particular card was mailed to me by a lady from North Georgia. The comment card simply read, "Thank you to the staff for the Christian witness."

I had to read this card several times before I could believe what I had read. The card immediately brought tears to my eyes. This lady was thanking the staff for their Christian witness even though they did not verbalize anything about Christianity.

Relaxed availability will bring us to this kind of *natural* witness. When we as pastors' wives are relaxed by Christ—experiencing daily mind-renewal and rejuvenation and refreshment through communication with God, we can be available to people, to express the beauty of human relationships that Christ brings us and to be a witness to the watching world. ■





Randy Sawyer

## The Philosophy of Expository Preaching

**B**ernard Manning defined a sermon as “a manifestation of the Incarnate Word, from the written Word, by the spoken word.” While it is possible to find more thorough definitions, this one does place the emphasis where it belongs, and accurately expresses what preaching is all about.

Preaching is the verbal unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ based on the authority of God’s revealed truth. Yet we are left to ask a basic question—what form should a sermon take?

### Which Sermon Form?

Homiletical theorists have classified sermon types in various ways. Professor Hughes Oliphant Old (*The Reading and Preaching of the Scripture*) believes that five major genres of preaching have appeared and reappeared throughout church history.

These are: 1) the expository sermon, 2) the evangelistic sermon, 3) the catechetical sermon (outlining basic Christian teaching to new believers), 4) the festal sermon (which explains the theme of various Christian holidays), and 5) the prophetic sermon (“a particular word for a particular time and a particular place”).

W. E. Sangster, in his excellent work, *The Craft of Sermon Construction and Illustration*, suggests that sermons are distinguished by their subject matter (e.g. biblical, ethical, devotional, doctrinal or evangelistic), their structure (e.g. direct exposition, progressive argument or narrative), and their psychological method (i.e. the preacher as teacher, prophet or exhorter).

A more widely accepted way of defining sermon types is found in *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* by John A. Broadus, who argues that sermons can be categorized as topical, textual or expository.

More recently, homileticians and

preachers have opted for sermons, the basic structure of which is story-form, arguing that hearers think in images rather than abstract principles, and more importantly, that Jesus utilized the story-form most frequently in His preaching.

Who is right? Which sermon form allows the preacher to fulfill his calling most effectively? Before attempting an answer, one foundational issue should be discussed that will help set the parameters.

### The God Who Speaks

It is the Christian position that an infinite, personal God created a finite, personal being, and that this personal God communicates with His creation. The fact that God communicates with man through natural revelation is well established and beyond the scope of this article.

What is important for this discussion, however, is the fact that this communicating God has also sought to express Himself via special revelation, the Holy Scriptures. Is it unreasonable to think that God would communicate with His creation through written form? No, not at all. This communication is logical, based on the fact that both God and man communicate verbally.

Likewise, God’s communication to man is intelligible. Certainly, an infinite God could have spoken to finite man in such a way that man would have never understood. But He did not. In fact, in order to insure that man could and would understand His message, He employed man to communicate His words to man.

Early on, God utilized the prophets to speak His words to men (II Peter 1:21). Then He spoke more clearly and loudly through the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2).

However, both the prophets and the Incarnate Word were culturally,

geographically and historically limited—God speaking to a particular people at a particular point in time by a particular person. But with God’s Spirit-inspired Word (the written revelation), He is able to communicate His personal and redemptive message to all men, regardless of their cultural or historical frame of reference.

So we can accurately affirm that God has spoken, and God is speaking. He has spoken through His prophets and His Son. God is still speaking today through His prophets and His Son, as their words are repeatedly carried from generation to generation through the preaching of the Holy Scriptures.

### Allowing God to Speak

In light of this foundational observation, which sermon form allows the preacher to fulfill his calling most effectively, a calling in which a man dares to speak God’s words for Him?

The answer would appear to be simple. Whichever form most effectively lays open the Bible so that people can clearly hear what God is saying to them is the preaching that would allow a man to most effectively fulfill such a high calling. The expository sermon and expository preaching fit this need in every way.

Expository preaching has been variously defined. According to Broadus, “an expository discourse may be defined as one which is occupied mainly, or at any rate very largely, with the exposition of Scripture.”

John R. W. Stott amplifies the definition by suggesting that exposition “refers to the content of the sermon rather than its style. To expound Scripture is to bring out of the text what is there and expose it to view.”

Haddon Robinson goes even further and defines expository preaching as “the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted



through a historical, grammatical, and literary study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit applies first to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through him to his listeners."

Each of the definitions has merit and adds something to our understanding of expository preaching. However, ringing clear from each definition is the fact that the sum and substance of the expository sermon is the God of the Word. The text shapes the message.

In expository preaching, the expositor does not impose his mind on the scriptures, but seeks to expose God's mind through a clear exposition of the scripture. Expository preaching is more than a style, method or preference; it is an understanding of the preacher's primary task. It is a philosophy of ministry.

In expository preaching, God is allowed to say what He wants to say; He is allowed to keep on speaking. Isn't this the purpose of all preaching anyway?

Paul's final word to young Timothy hits the mark exactly. "*Preach the Word.*" Anything less does not take scripture seriously enough, and cannot legitimately be called preaching. ■

## Directory Update

### CALIFORNIA

Gerald Myer to Porterville Church, Porterville  
from Capitol City Church, Little Rock, AR

### OKLAHOMA

Jack Richey to First Church, Duncan

### TENNESSEE

Tommy Street to Stony Point Church, VanLeer  
from Canah Chapel Church, Erwin

### TEXAS

Don Bailey to San Antonio as home missionary

# THE TOGETHER WAY

November 2000

Receipts:	Designated	CO-OP	Total	Year To Date Designated	Year To Date CO-OP	Year To Date Total
State						
Alabama	\$ 149.33	\$ 161.44	\$ 310.77	\$ 4,349.03	\$ 1,783.31	\$ 6,132.34
Arizona	.00	86.00	86.00	69.00	213.00	282.00
Arkansas	13,575.32	18,294.57	31,869.89	154,441.53	171,635.49	326,077.02
California	77.00	.00	77.00	77.00	8,818.17	8,895.17
Colorado	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Delaware	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Florida	.00	.00	.00	714.55	6,000.00	6,714.55
Georgia	30,689.61	1,165.10	31,854.71	344,268.09	18,123.15	362,391.24
Hawaii	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Idaho	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Illinois	9,590.91	2,595.44	12,186.35	93,487.25	22,573.34	116,060.59
Indiana	2,892.65	594.66	3,487.31	16,056.20	2,513.13	18,569.33
Iowa	.00	728.10	728.10	625.00	3,476.35	4,101.35
Kansas	.00	.00	.00	.00	487.01	487.01
Kentucky	320.00	1,002.68	1,322.68	13,902.59	10,971.42	24,874.01
Louisiana	20.00	.00	20.00	80.00	155.00	235.00
Maryland	.00	.00	.00	.00	459.36	459.36
Michigan	17,946.97	4,276.90	22,223.87	245,625.61	34,184.53	279,810.14
Mississippi	5,837.38	287.97	6,125.35	72,893.01	6,332.90	79,225.91
Missouri	38,448.10	14,614.24	53,062.34	446,492.91	150,900.81	597,393.72
Montana	.00	.00	.00	30.00	.00	30.00
Nebraska	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
New Jersey	.00	.00	.00	351.21	.00	351.21
New Mexico	419.87	49.95	469.82	6,489.48	466.82	6,956.30
North Carolina	4,017.00	2,600.88	6,617.88	16,884.39	27,833.88	44,718.27
Ohio	.00	.00	.00	134,361.41	30,556.16	164,917.57
Oklahoma	54,498.88	11,895.88	66,394.76	627,471.18	120,226.14	747,697.32
South Carolina	76,867.19	146.88	77,014.07	529,157.68	550.01	529,707.69
South Dakota	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Tennessee	3,641.37	1,798.77	5,440.14	135,849.61	21,190.54	157,040.15
Texas	8,417.49	288.59	8,706.08	105,786.51	3,329.21	109,115.72
Virginia	234.09	131.25	365.34	6,922.07	429.05	7,351.12
Virgin Islands	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
West Virginia	4,797.42	100.62	4,898.04	18,964.78	873.04	19,837.82
Wisconsin	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Canada	1,033.78	13.22	1,047.00	7,263.08	129.22	7,392.30
Northwest Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	708.86	.00	708.86
Northeast Assoc.	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Other	.00	(.02)	(.02)	.00	.41	.41
Totals	\$ 273,474.36	\$ 60,833.12	\$ 334,307.48	\$ 2,983,322.03	\$ 644,211.45	\$ 3,627,533.48

Disbursements:						
Executive Office	\$ 1,854.45	\$ 27,374.97	\$ 29,229.42	\$ 21,395.29	\$ 289,895.08	\$ 311,290.37
Foreign Missions	155,689.59	7,695.37	163,384.96	1,756,231.38	81,492.71	1,837,724.09
FWBBC	20,044.93	7,695.37	27,740.30	210,557.16	81,492.71	292,049.87
Home Missions	85,595.93	6,022.45	91,618.38	828,102.67	63,776.85	891,879.52
Retirement & Insurance	314.48	4,684.15	4,998.63	5,128.16	49,604.27	54,732.43
Master's Men	248.95	4,684.15	4,933.10	5,056.94	49,604.27	54,661.21
Com. for Theo. Integrity	63.90	167.29	231.19	1,170.64	1,771.64	2,942.28
FWB Foundation	151.74	2,007.50	2,159.24	3,505.48	21,259.00	24,764.48
Historical Commission	46.55	167.29	213.84	298.29	1,771.64	2,069.93
Music Commission	2.71	167.29	170.00	198.12	1,771.64	1,969.76
Media Commission	150.06	167.29	317.35	823.48	1,771.64	2,595.12
Hillsdale FWB College	1,870.05	.00	1,870.05	19,618.31	.00	19,618.31
Other	7,441.02	.00	7,441.02	131,236.11	.00	131,236.11
Totals	\$ 273,474.36	\$ 60,833.12	\$ 334,307.48	\$ 2,983,322.03	\$ 644,211.45	\$ 3,627,533.48





The 2001 theme for the Student & Children Ministries is, **GO No Reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets**. Our emphasis is the importance of missions in children and student ministry.

During the past ten years, our Free Will Baptist churches have caught the vision of taking students to our home mission churches and to inner city works for short-term mission trips during the summer months. While this is a noble thing and we are very proud of the leaders who have helped mold these students and their world view towards missions, it is now time to jump to the next level.

We want to challenge all of our churches to help their students find out what God wants them to do to reach lost people. God may ask some of our students to give their lives to a foreign country. He may ask some to train for the biggest mission field here on our own soil...the public school. He may ask some to stay here and teach others the necessity of sharing the gospel

across national and racial boundaries. Whatever God wants our students to do, we want them to be ready. We are dedicating this entire year to training student workers, children workers, and students to close their eyes and see what God sees.

Our theme comes from two different sources. The word "Go" we find in several places throughout the Scriptures, most notably Matthew 28:19 where Christ says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." We have been instructed to GO, and we must teach our students and our children this truth.

The phrase "No Reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets" were the words found inside William Borden's Bible after his death. Borden died in 1913 at the age of 25 while in Egypt where he contracted cerebral meningitis soon after his arrival. Borden had gone to Egypt to share the gospel. The news of his death made headlines all across the United States. However, the words he left inside his Bible have left their mark on the hearts of many after him, giving them strength to carry on when sharing the gospel.

No Reserves, No Retreats, No Regrets. This is not merely a statement or even an attitude. It is a focus, a focus on God first, others second, and ourselves last.

We believe there is a place in children's ministry for missions. We should teach them while they are young what God has already instructed them to do.

We believe there is a place in student ministry for missions. We should help mold them and show them what God is doing so their hearts can become one with His.

Join us in this exciting year. Our prayer is that God will use our efforts to work in the hearts of our children and students for years to come as they take the reigns of leadership and GO sharing the gospel across our world.

For more information about Student & Children Ministries and events, write to:

**Student & Children Ministries**  
**P.O. Box 17306**  
**Nashville, TN 37217**



**NO RESERVES NO RETREATS NO REGRETS**





Thomas Marberry

## 2 Corinthians in The NIV Application Commentary

Dr. Scott J. Hafemann

(Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000, 536 pp, hardback, \$24.99).

**D**r. Scott J. Hafemann is the Gerald F. Hawthorne professor of New Testament Greek and exegesis at Wheaton College. He is also the author of *Suffering and Ministry in the Spirit*, an outstanding exegetical study of II Corinthians 2:14-3:3.

As in the other volumes of this commentary series, the author focuses his attention both on what each passage meant when it was first written and on how we can interpret it and apply it correctly in modern contexts. This transition is not always easy.

At times it is difficult for the modern interpreter to determine precisely how the original recipients of a letter interpreted that letter. First-century middle-eastern culture is quite different from modern western culture. Also, our understanding of the first century is incomplete. We simply do not know all the dynamics that were at work.

It is sometimes difficult to make the transition from the first century to the 21st century. There is the danger that modern interpreters may not apply the teachings of the passage to our modern context in an appropriate manner.

There is no book where this transition from the first century to the 21st century is more difficult than it is in II Corinthians. The book is generally recognized as the most difficult book in the New Testament to interpret.

Paul's relationship with the Christians in Corinth was a complex one, and we do not know all the details of that relationship. He visited Corinth on several occasions, and we do not know everything that happened on those visits. He also wrote several letters to them. Some of those letters have been lost (see I Cor. 5:9).

Much of Paul's relationship with the Christians in Corinth is not specifically outlined in II Corinthians; it is implied. For this reason, statements

that were very clear to them may be puzzling to us today.

Dr. Hafemann does an effective job of wrestling with these difficulties. He has produced a commentary that is thoughtful and insightful. It helps the reader come to grips with the doctrinal teachings of this complex and difficult book. In the introductory section, the author adopts a traditional view of the date and authorship of the book. He argues that Paul wrote it from Ephesus in the spring of 54 or 55.

This was probably the fourth letter that Paul wrote to Corinth. According to Hafemann, Paul actually wrote four letters in the following order: the lost letter mentioned in I Corinthians 5:9, I Corinthians, the severe letter mentioned in II Corinthians 2; and, finally, II Corinthians.

Most authors see II Corinthians as a collection of two or more letters that Paul wrote to Corinth at different times. Hafemann does not adopt this approach. He sees II Corinthians as a unity.

The Corinthian church was heavily influenced by the culture of the city in which it was located. As this author notes, "Filled with the Spirit, but still heavily influenced by their society, the Corinthians were prone to intellectual pride." They placed great emphasis on their knowledge and their spiritual experiences. They developed "a self-serving attitude of boasting and moral laxity."

Because of this emphasis, these believers had great difficulty accepting the suffering and service of the Apostle Paul. In their view, a true apostle of Christ would be victorious. He would not suffer as Paul had.

Much of II Corinthians is devoted to Paul's defense of his ministry against the attacks of certain false teachers. These false teachers came to Corinth "preaching a view of Christ and the Spirit that the Corinthians wanted to hear. Instead of calling the Corinthi-

ans to a life of faithful endurance and love in the midst of adversity, Paul's opponents promised them deliverance from suffering and a steady diet of spiritual experiences."

Suffering is an important theme in II Corinthians. Paul tells the Corinthians that his suffering is an evidence of his apostleship not a denial of it.

As Hafemann correctly notes, there is much in II Corinthians that is relevant and applicable to the church today. It seems that many in the Corinthian church had adopted an early form of the "health and wealth gospel" which is so popular today. They expected Christianity to deliver them from all difficulties and suffering. They did not want to live lives of service and dedication in the midst of a pagan society.

In this commentary, Hafemann demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of current literature on II Corinthians. He is not hesitant to disagree with other authors when he believes that they have interpreted a passage incorrectly. He also demonstrates great familiarity with Jewish and pagan cultures in the first century. He devotes considerable attention to how Paul understood, interpreted and used the Old Testament in his preaching and teaching.

This is a commentary I can recommend highly, but it is not a commentary for beginners. The interpretation of II Corinthians is often a challenging task, and this author approaches it in a comprehensive and responsible manner. It is a detailed and thorough commentary on a difficult book. ■





Jack Williams

## Adolph the Ice Dog

**T**he Tusculum Road Dog Society voted to dislike me 20 years back for reasons known only to them. Which means that I now speak softly and carry a big stick when I go out jogging; either that or run faster than the slowest dog. Since speed is not an option, I've settled for bigger sticks—I'm up to a three-foot long, three-pound police riot stick which slows my jogging but does deter the more sinister canines on my morning route.

**Over the years,** I've seen my Tusculum Road neighbors move away taking with them some of the meanest dogs in Tennessee. Unfortunately, they all sold their homes to other folks who own large, surly mutts. Apparently when dogs move away with their owners, they leave notes about me under the front porch for their successors.

That's why I'm never surprised to be cussed at 5:00 a.m. by foreign dogs who don't know me and have no relatives in the area who could misinform them about me.

There's this one big hill a half mile from my front door that I climb twice daily, once going and once coming back from my morning jog. The hill is about eight miles high when it snows or has ice on it, but only about 200 feet high when dry. The western side of the hill is populated with industrial-sized dogs who use microphones when they bark.

**At one time or other** I've encountered a number of four-legged menaces: I've been chased down the hill (or up it) by a bulldog the size of a Volkswagen Superbeetle. That's also where I met my first Russian wolf hound. He loped over, reared up, planted his front paws on my shoulders and looked *down* at me (!) as if to ask, "What's for breakfast . . . hmmm?"

But my great dread has always been the German shepherds on Tusculum Hill. I think they know how I feel about the Third Reich. And they are smart enough to stay just out of reach of my riot club but criminal enough to try their luck every morning . . . except when it's raining.

**The day Mother Nature** sleeted and dumped three inches of ice on the road, then covered it all with four inches of wet snow found me out at 5:00 a.m. as usual struggling up Tusculum Hill. I left my dog stick at home assuming any dog smart enough to ignore me in the rain wouldn't waste his time in ice and snow.

I had topped the hill and started down the western slope when I realized I'd made a tactical blunder. An 80-pound German shepherd I had named "Adolph" for his ugly disposition, had me in his cross hairs and was closing at approximately the speed of a runaway locomotive. I felt like I was about to be the breakfast of champions.

If that hairy set of teeth got near enough to clamp down, I was done for because it was too slick to go faster than a nervous walk. Adolph came up over the embankment like a heat-seeking missile. Just then, Mother Nature intervened.

**Maybe the ice** threw his aim off, but as Adolph made his last turn to grab my good left leg, he lost all traction. He slid by with the oddest expression on his face clawing for traction, his four-wheel drive suddenly inoperative. Both of us were quite surprised.

About 40 feet down the hill, Adolph bounced off the curb, decided he was all right other than being embarrassed and circled around on the grassy road bank to try again. By this time I'd almost passed out from laughing so hard which seemed to irritate him.

**On his second pass,** Adolph hit the ice about four feet from me, sat back on his haunches and slid by with his head turned toward me like a snapping turtle. When he hit the far curb, his momentum carried him over the side and he tumbled down the eight-foot bank.

Humiliated, Adolph tucked tail and ran down the hill to a four-bedroom house where he landed on the porch and promptly slid into the front door just as the owner opened it. Which set up another round of howling and whining while I stood in the road gasping for breath from the hard work of laughing.

The owner yelled, "What in the [naughty word], [naughty word], [expletive deleted] are you doing to my dog!"

At which point, I turned quickly to continue downhill on my walk. Immediately I lost my footing and was more embarrassed than Adolph as I rolled under the guard rail into a fellow's front yard.

**Forty minutes later** when I made my careful return up the hill, Adolph was nowhere in sight. All I could hear was the sound of tree limbs snapping and falling under the weight of the ice, and the high-pitched whine of somebody's pick-up truck losing the battle on the slick eastern side of Tusculum Hill.

Adolph never chased me again. I would like to think it's because I demonstrated superior intelligence and he was too ashamed to face me. But I suspect it's because the next day I began carrying the three-foot riot stick even on snow days. A fellow never knows when Adolph the Ice Dog may take to wearing paw chains. ■

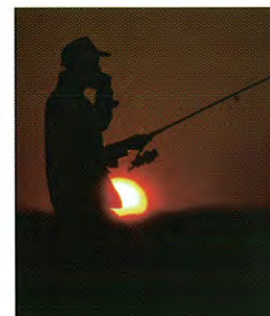
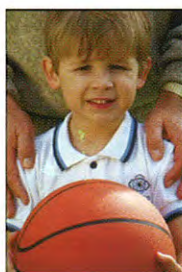
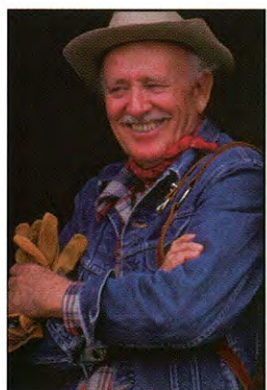


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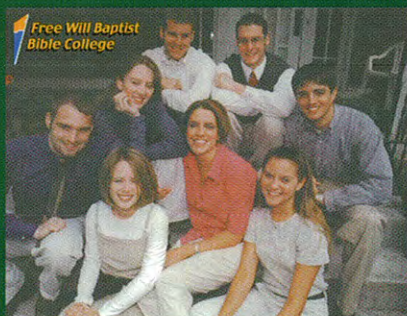
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